

Make Happy Speech

Bo Burnham

What is it about? It's about performing. I try to make my show about other things but it always ends up becoming about performing. I started performing very young - as a teenager. Y'know, professionally. And as a comedian what you're supposed to do is talk about what you know. And what I knew, always, was performing - so to talk about traffic or laundry felt incredibly disingenuous.

But I worried that making a show about performing would be too meta - it wouldn't be relatable to people that aren't performers. But what I found is that - I don't think anyone isn't.

Can we get the house lights up for a second, and could you - let the lights on stage - let the artifice fade away. Now we're all the same. I mean, you're all facing this way still. Y'know, I look at it - I look out at you and it's a very diverse crowd.

I mean, more European than I would have hoped but we'll get there. I look at the young people. Y'know, and I feel like I was born in 1990 and I was sort of raised in America when it was a cult of self expression, and I was just taught, y'know, express myself and have things to say and everyone will care about them. And I think everyone was taught that, and most of us found out no-one gives a shit what we think. So we flock to performers by the thousands 'cause we're the few that have found an audience, and then I'm supposed to get up here and say follow your dreams - as if this is a meritocracy? It is not, okay? I had a privileged life, and I got lucky, and I'm unhappy.

They say it's like the 'me' generation. It's not. The arrogance is taught, or it was cultivated. It's self-conscious. That's what it is. It's conscious of self. Social media - it's just the market's answer to a generation that demanded to perform so the market said, here - perform. Perform everything to each other, all the time for no reason. It's prison - it's horrific. It's performer and audience melded together. What do we want more than to lie in our bed at the end of the day and just watch our life as a satisfied audience member. I know very little about anything. But what I do know is that if you can live your life without an audience, you should do it.

And now you're thinking, how the fuck are you gonna dig the show outta this weird hole?

Oh, you want me to be funny and make a point? Nah, nah nah nah nah nah nah.

Batman.